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The Golden Rule Against the Rule of Gold

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THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

The Social Mission of Baptists

By Prof. Walter Rauschenbusch, D.D., Rochester Theological Seminary

Baptists have a special call to take a hand in the new movement for the social liberation of the people. Their past history puts a solemn obligation upon them.

The Anabaptist movement during the Reformation was a people's movement. There were no princes or governments to back it. It developed its immense strength solely by the enthusiasm and the awful sacrifices of the common people. It spread mainly among the lower working class, that class which would correspond most to the city wage-workers of our own day. It was not purely a religious movement. In fact, no part of the Reformation movement was purely religious. There were political and social motives at work throughout. The Lutheran, Zwinglian and Calvinistic movements spread among the nobility and the upper classes of the cities, and the victory of the Reformation usually meant a revolutionary forward movement of these classes, by which they wrested some power and privilege from older privileged classes. Consequently these Reformation movements took their coloring, their motives, their theology, their economic ideas from the classes within which they propagated. In the same way the Anabaptist movement took its social spirit from the common people.

The Anabaptists took a condemnatory attitude to all that was fundamental in the existing governments. They condemned warfare and most of them refused to bear arms. They condemned capital punishment and all the bloody business by which governments put their fear on the people. They refused to take oaths, by which the ruling classes bound the consciences of their subjects and officials to be loyal to them and their doings. They refused to let their members hold civil office, because thereby they would have been mixed up in these sinful actions. Many of them believed vividly in the speedy coming of the Lord for judgment, and that was simply another way of believing in the social revolution. The Lord was to destroy the reign of the wicked, which meant the present rulers, and bring liberty and justice to the poor and suffering. Several of their most eminent leaders had taken part in the Peasants' Rising of 1525. Most of them believed in non-resistance and fought against wrong merely by the protest of their words and their blood. But at the end the pent-up despair and anger of the oppressed people flared up in bloodly revolt at Munster. Baptists have always had to suffer through the disgrace of the Munster revolution. The triumphant classes have made them bear the reproach for once having been identified with the social revolution.

If we glance back of the Reformation to those earlier sects or movements which in some points approximated the later Baptist ideas, we find that they were always more or less revolutionary in their political and social aspirations too. The radical movements of the Middle Ages, of which the Anabaptist Movement was a continuation and revival, all held communistic ideals. The only chance which the German Anabaptists got to live in peace and to work out their convictions in practical organization, was in Moravia, and there they developed successful and powerful communistic settlements which lasted for nearly a hundred years and were only destroyed by war and persecution.

All this shows the democratic and social elements fermenting in the beginnings of Baptist history.

In England the Reformation began later and moved more slowly than on the Continent. But in the 17th century under similar conditions a new Baptist movement arose. Again the Baptists, with their allied kindred movements of the Independents and Quakers, were the exponents of the radical religious ideas of the common people, and again their religious movement was inseparably connected with social and political ideals. Cromwell's army, which was the active agent and finally the only mainstay of the great English Revolution, was largely composed of Independents and Baptists. Green in his History of the English People says that England for two hundred years has been engaged in realizing the progressive ideas mapped out for it by these representatives of the common people.

Baptist ideas spread rapidly for a while, as long as they were identified with the general revolutionary awakening. When that awakening subsided, Baptists became mere religionists and their story is tame and sad reading for some time thereafter. They spent their strength on questions of theology and church order, became a minor species of the larger Protestant bodies, and lost much of that impulse and spirit which had really been the characteristic thing in their early history.

It would be an interesting thing to point out how Baptists, by their effort to restore apostolic Christianity, by the democracy of their church order, and by their natural affinity for the working classes, are pledged through God's guidance to take a vigorous share in the social movement. It would also be a fine task to show that they have not been entirely forgetful of the traditions of their origin, but that as individuals and churches they have taken a remarkable part in the forward movements of the past and in the social movement of our own day. Perhaps some Baptist reader may follow up this suggestion.

Rochester, N. Y. WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH.

A Minister's View of the Socialist Movement

By Rev. Frank Leonard Anderson, Ph. D., Pastor Normal Park Baptist Church

This paper is autobiographical and not representative. The writer speaks for himself and not for others.

A minister is expected to know more about the fundamental teachings of Christianity than about any other fact in human history. In order to appreciate the criticism Christianity passes upon any historical movement he must be fairly well informed as to its motives, to say nothing of its methods. Sometimes the spirit of a movement is good but its method is bad. The minister who speaks so much about the motives of men must take heed lest he judge a new, unpopular movement by its committee of ways and means.

Then, too, a minister, above all men, should recognize practically that the *representatives of a cause are as a rule inferior to the cause itself*. Christianity and Christians, for instance, are not always interchangeable terms. Socialism has often been [illegible] sufferer because of its representatives. In this respect it is in no sense exceptional nor individualistic.

The ridiculous statements of some Socialists that the church is a curse, or that religion and God are hindrances to progress, or that the family must be dissolved by "higher" ideals of the home—these I pass by without comment, for they have nothing to do with Socialism as such any more than the wart on Cromwell's face was an index of his character. I am a Baptist, but I object to the man who judges the Baptist *denomination* by some of the ideas held by those who are members of the Baptist churches. Personally I am always tempted to catalogue a man in that class known as ignorami when I hear him criticizing Socialism because some Socialists care more for a mug of beer and an old dirty cigarette than they do for the church, for religion and for God. Such Socialists are mere warts on the lusty body of Socialism.

Then another man cannot accept Socialism because he cannot get his pet question answered. He asks, How can you pass from our present system of economics to Socialism? Good, sensible Socialists do not cross bridges until they get to them. They frankly confess that they do not know how it will be done. But they are sure that when we come to face that problem, we shall have the needed good sense and grace to meet it, provided we go forward and act upon the light we now have. As respectable Christians we should remember the Saviour's good advice when he exhorted us to do our duty to-day and not be anxious about to-morrow. Humanity has changed economic systems several times and survived. How can a department store remodel its building, making it practically new, and still carry on its business while the transformation takes place? To me it is a great puzzle. But the thing is done. Our economic systems have had their day and ceased to be. Every change has been the sign of progress.

Look at the larger things of Socialism. It has a mission that is unselfishly individualistic. I listened not many years ago to a lecture which had an evident purpose, apart from the coin, to warn the audience against Socialism. The lecturer represented the movement as that of the mass against the individual. That was a clear case of misrepresentation. The speaker had forgotten the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," even against an enemy.

We must admit that Socialists at times misrepresent the individual and make him out as a weakling, kicked hither and thither by the varying and capricious forces of circumstances. Socialists have too often been guilty of underestimating the power of individual initiative in their love for that indefinite something called society. But to say that Socialism is opposed to the liberty of the individual is nonsense and not Socialism. Socialism stands squarely for the liberty of the individual. It comes with a message of emancipation. The man who carries our mail to our door has as much liberty as the cash girl or clerk in a department store. We say we are free, we glory in our freedom, we think of Runnymede, of Saratoga and of Yorktown; we vote, at times oftener than we want; we are proud of [illegible] racy; we rejoice that in America tubs stand on their own bottoms. Emerson told us,

> "We grant no dukedoms to the few,
> We hold like rights, and shall;
> Equal on Sunday in the pew,
> On Monday in the mall."

It is verily the truth that we grant no dukedoms to the few. We just grant them special privileges and they do the rest.

Political liberty and economic liberty are not always synonymous. What we lack is economic liberty. But political liberty is not worth ten cents on the dollar, so long as we have an industrial oligarchy in our midst with power such as would have gladdened the heart of a James or a Charles in old England. Harriman, Morgan and Rockefeller have more autocratic power than any king who sat on the throne of the Stuarts, A few men can and do dictate prices, wages and output. He who controls my living has power over me such as any tyrant might covet. The multitudes must ask for the privilege to work and make a living. The few can say whether the many shall live or starve. The many sweat in order to secure for the few the opportunity of spending millions at Newport and live sumptuously every day, while they toil not neither do they spin, and yet Solomon was a ragged urchin as compared with them. The many work that the few may drone it.

If you think that we have liberty just notice this fact: Some unpopular, righteous, needed agitation is on. Speak to the employees whether in factory or in office. Many will tell you they are with you. But they dare not come out openly *for their bread and butter depend on their silence.* Why is it almost impossible to secure data respecting wages, etc., of the employees in our department stores, for instance? They dare not tell. Their living depends on their silence. And yet we hear men saying that Socialism will put the individual into bondage. We ask, Is the individual free *now?*

Socialism, as I see it, is a great concerted movement having for its purpose the securing of practical, economic freedom for the individual by making him a shareholder in the products of his own labor. Our boasted political liberty will be worth something only when we shall have economic liberty. Freedom of speech is a chimera so long as another can say whether or not I shall have the right to make a living. Socialism is not going to imprison the individual. It will liberate him and give him the opportunity to sink without the help of a professional drowner or to swim without the kind favors of some benevolent charity organization.

That last statement suggests another phase of the point we are discussing. Tennyson asks:

> "Why should not these great sirs
> Give up their parks some dozen times a year
> To let the people breathe?"

Breathing is a privilege bestowed upon the many by the few. Charity, what sins are committed in thy name! The many become the parasites, the dependents, the hangers-on of the few who have work and *air* to give. But think. The many could have their own parks and breathing spots if justice were abroad among men. Occasionally the millionaires and multimillionaires get together and dance for the good of the poor. God forgive them! They hope to be forgiven because they have been so charitable! But the poor could live without this charity if the few paid just wages and did not raise the price of commodities at a lightning rate, making it impossible for the wage to get ahead of the cost of living. If the many shared justly in the results of their hard labor they could get along without charity.

Socialism will deliver the individual from the bondage of a false, dependable relationship to those who have a corner on God's goods. Our ideals are changing. A growing class of people is regarding the magnificent philanthropic contributions of some men as the returning of stolen goods to their rightful owners. Many are ceasing to speak of such "gifts" as philanthropic. Stolen goods returned to their owner do not, as a rule, swell the sum of charity contributions. Charity must decrease and justice increase before the curse of patronage shall cease and the day of genuine liberty supported and defended by justice shall come.

There is another large fact about the Socialist movement. It is practical, genuine brotherhood. We have asked almost despairingly,

> "When shall all men's good
> Be each man's rule?"

We have longed to see that day. The Socialist movement puts the emphasis, not on externals, but on fundamentals. It deals with man as man and not as a member of a class whose distinguishing marks are wholly superficial. The movement is international and interracial.

But some one asks, Is it not the laboring class against the capitalist class? Of course some Socialists do not see the depths of the movement of which they are a part. Then, too, in its present stage the movement is struggling for a place on which it may stand. Therefore, it seems to be a class movement. The war for our independence seemed to be the colonies arrayed against England. Undoubtedly many of our patriots saw no deeper or broader meaning in that struggle. There were men, however, who saw that the colonies were helping to solve the most acute questions that were confronting the statesmen of England. The success of the colonies meant good for England. The Socialist movement *seems* to be a class movement. Superficially it is. But it will save capitalism from its own curse as truly as the Union armies saved the South from the curse of slavery. The war was good for the slave. It was better for the slave holder.

The Socialists of France refuse to fight the Socialists of Germany. The Socialists of the United States would never be guilty of spurring on our nation to fight with Japan. Socialists recognize in a practical way the idea of the oneness of humanity. We are brothers and therefore we will not wrong one another. The Socialists give the nations a workable international policy not based on suspicion and intrigue. It is a policy of brotherly love based on a fraternity of needs and of capacity to help. The Socialist movement has forgotten absolutely to have a place for the "400," whether they are individuals, nations, or races. The *servant* of all shall have the highest place and the highest honors. Is any race weak or ignorant? Then the strong nation will serve the weaker and not please itself. Brotherhood will send the battleships either to the merchant marine or to the scrap iron pile. It will turn the swords into plowshares and send the soldier to take his place with the farmer, mechanic and servants of the common good. The money now spent for navies and armies will be used for the genuine good of men—for education, physical, mental, and spiritual. Battleships and brotherhood are mutually exclusive.

But there are objections to the Socialist movement. I grant it. When the angel will announce that time shall be no more there will undoubtedly be some one to object. There are scores of objections to Socialism. The most persistent comes from those who worship at the holy shrine of vested rights, falsely so-called. But let all who will be honest with themselves and with truth, first of all get a grip on the great ideal to which the movement surrenders itself and which it seeks to realize in human history. It is a serious movement. Its advocates are earnest men. The superficial things in the movement should not absorb our attention. Many things will pass away that are now connected with this cause. But the spirit, the motive, the purpose, these are permanent.

Socialists need to learn humility. Reformers never have too much of this grace. Socialism is not a panacea. It is a humble servant and helper of our kind, raised up for such a time as this. It is not so large as Christianity. It is not a synonym for our religion. Neither is the church. It is but one of the many servants of the kingdom of God. Servants come and servants go, but the kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. But it is glorious to be a servant of such a kingdom.

FRANK LEONARD ANDERSON.

Chicago.

Socialistic Principles in Baptist Church Polity

By Rev. J. Peter Brunner.

Baptists in the past have been pioneers in the struggle for liberty. They fought for religious liberty and likewise for political liberty without which, as they foresaw, the former could not exist. True to their history Baptists should again be in the foreground when both religious and political liberty are endangered by economic enslavement.

Socialism is coming to deliver us from economic bondage, and Baptists should not find it difficult to accept its principles, because many of them are found right in our own church polity and all we need to do is to apply them to our economic life.

1. Take, for instance, our condition of membership. It is based on absolute equality. The only required condition is evidence of a right relation with God professed in baptism. No economic, social or political question enters in. Young or old, rich or poor, educated or not, high or low, all who would join a Baptist church must enter through the same door. This Socialistic principle of equality is continued as long as membership lasts. Pastors, deacons, trustees, superintendents and whatever other officers there may be, have as many rights and privileges as other members, but no more. Of a Baptist church it can truly be said "equal rights to all, special privileges to none."

2. Then look at our church government. Our officers are our servants. Pastors, deacons and other officers are elected by "universal suffrage." If our servants are efficient their services are appreciated; if not, we may exercise the power of the "imperative mandate" or "recall." We also exercise the "initiative" and the "referendum." Any number of members of any church may inaugurate new undertakings in accordance with our great constitution, the New Testament. These may be given to a committee for further consideration or formulation, but nothing becomes a law until again referred to the members of the local churches which by majorities adopt or reject. Witness the recently organized Northern Baptist Convention. The idea was launched by individuals, freely discussed in press and pulpit, a temporary organization effected, and now the whole matter lies before the local churches to be voted upon by them for final disposition.

There is the Initiative and Referendum pure and simple.

3. Then there are our ordinances (we have no sacraments), baptism and communion. These are not mystical instruments in the hands of an organized hierarchy with which to bestow or withhold divine blessings; no, they are instruments in the hands of the members by which they express and emphasize fraternal fellowship. They are symbols of brotherhood. By baptism we enter into this relation and by communion we express its continuance.

4. Our worship also belongs to the worshippers in that it is not conducted for them but by them. It is not sacerdotal but covenental. It is not a priesthood coming to God for the people but a brotherhood coming directly to the Father with no one between them.

5. Observe, too, our mission to the world as we conceive of it. Our churches are not an end in themselves but rather a means to an end. The end in view is the Kingdom of God upon this earth, in which the principles of equality, justice and brotherhood shall be as natural in human relations as water and air are necessary to bodily existence.

We live as churches to serve humanity by saving individuals and society.

6. Co-operation is another principle not foreign to the Baptist mind. How loosely we seem to be organized without any central governing body, and yet how effectively do we work together through our great missionary societies in

the North and through the boards in the South. A dozen or so of really good corporations, organized not for profit but for the welfare of humanity.

Here, then, are some Baptist principles which Socialists hold in common with us: equality, universal suffrage, initiative, referendum and imperative mandate; brotherhood, service and cooperation.

Now when I call these principles Socialistic I do not mean that we have learnt them from Socialists. However, I do mean to say that they take these principles which we have adopted to conduct our spiritual affairs and desire to apply them to the entire life.

Therefore we, as Baptists who have long lived under and by these principles, and who would fight for them with our very lives, should be prepared by training and practice to understand them and be ready to aid in the effort to take the principles of life of our Lord outside of the church walls and the confines of religious endeavor and apply them in the wide sphere of our social and economic affairs.

J. Peter Brunner.

Kyle, Texas.

The Reign of the New Humanity

By Rev. Leighton Williams, D. D.

Our Lord's preaching of the Kingdom of God was a re-affirmation by Him of the familiar burden of Old Testament prophecy, namely, the establishment upon earth of a rule of righteousness, mercy and peace. The justice of this view is now generally conceded. But a careful study of our Lord's utterances, no less than of the general tenor of His life will show that His view of the Kingdom was far more than a re-affirmation of the prophetic idea. It is so distinctly an advance upon the Old Testament conception as to be practically a new and epoch-making discovery. This fact is quite as clear from the synoptic gospels as from the discourses in the fourth gospel. It is upon this transformation of the idea and the consequent changes in His own mode of life and in the constitution of His church that I propose to dwell.

"None greater among the prophets than John the Baptist," said the Master. Yet He added, "the least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Both identification and distinction are here manifest. He admires and approves the prophets as the greatest of men, yet He foresees a coming order of men greater still. He holds Himself to be greater, for He says that they bore witness of Him. But with Himself He ranks His apostles and followers generally. It is no less evident that the idea of the ministry is changed. He does not thunder like Moses or Elijah, and to those who would call down lightning from heaven upon His rejectors, He says, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." And at another time, "I came not to condemn, but to save the world."

The distinction between Jesus and the greatest of Old Testament prophets is conclusively stated by the writer of the fourth gospel, "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ," and the Christian church has felt the change to be so great as to constitute a new dispensation.

A distinction so well known and universally recognized would not need to be emphasized anew, if it were not unhappily evident that it may yet be forgotten or overlooked. But when we see a disposition among some critics to treat Jesus as but one in the great line of prophets, we do well to look to the foundations and safeguards of our faith, lest, as Charles H. Spurgeon once strikingly said, "the battlements of our faith be boulevarded away."

This is my justification for re-affirming a distinction between Jesus and the Old Testament prophets which might otherwise be assumed without argument.

Pursuing this line of thought still further, we can discover the beginning of this new point of view in our Lord's own inner consciousness and personal experience. He finds it first of all realized in Himself, though He declares that the scriptures bear witness to Him in this new character and office, and He in turn accepts and reaffirms their testimony.

Still further manifest is this new element as it is developed and set forth in the conception of the New Humanity to be found in all the New Testament writings, but stated with greatest fullness by St. Paul in his doctrine of the psychical and pneumatic—the natural and spiritual man. Whence comes this notion of the New Man, with strange and heavenly powers? Does he not find it in his own experience? Else how could he affirm it with such boldness? He is not the same man that he was before his vision on the Damascus road. Paul the Apostle is a changed man from Saul of Tarsus and he is as deeply convinced of the reality, importance and permanence of this new nature as he is of his identity with the man that once was, but now is not, and his hope for the world is that this wondrous transformation which he has experienced is yet to pass over the whole world.

This witness of the apostolic consciousness is authenticated by that of his fellow Christians and they all with one consent attribute the origin of it to their Lord. Paul therefore calls Jesus the New Adam, the head of a new creation, concerning whom he writes in terms which might seem to us wildly extravagant had we not learned to listen with reverence to the testimony of a religious insight so piercing as that of the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

Thus we have the Christian interest lifted to a new world. The theater of their destinies is no longer Judea with its sad political vicissitudes. Once they doubtless thought of Jesus as a new David who would redeem Israel from a foreign foe and sit on David's throne exerting the wise and peaceful sway of a new and greater Solomon, but the defeat and death of the cross had dashed all such hopes forever. The revelation of the risen and living Lord and the experience of Pentecost established the hope and faith of the church on a new and better foundation. It was no longer political revolution in Judea which they plotted. They now looked for the spiritual redemption of the world. The change wrought in European politics by the announcement of Columbus' great discovery is a faint portraiture of the transformation effected in the thought of the ancient world through the new teaching regarding the life and death of Jesus Christ and the new spiritual experience through which those who embraced it were found to pass.

How little there is in the utterances of our Lord of the sudden or catastrophic disturbance of the existing order and how by preference He presents the new as emerging from the old by a principle of life and growth through vital processes of birth and begetting. Even where he employs the apocalyptic imagery, current in His time, it seems to be as a needful concession to the dullness of his hearers' apprehension.

As the natural corollary of this view of the future, He taught the doctrine of non-resistance and forbade the resort to force. Hence His followers did not become passionate revolutionists like the Jewish Zealots, and in the armed collision between the Jewish nation and the Roman power a generation later, they remained passive and quiescent. In our time fallacious inferences have been drawn from this apparent indifference of primitive Christians to the state of secular society about them. But the essential nature of the Christian attitude witness and warfare remains the same in all ages. It is not rightly to be understood as indifference or acquiescence or postponement on the one hand, nor as political plotting or economic readjustment or merely moral or philosophical theories on the other. It is an ever working, ceaselessly active principle of spiritual life which has changed, is changing and will continue to change individual believers and the mass of humanity as well, till it has wrought out in complete perfection what St. Paul calls "the consummation of all things." Part of the activity of this vital principle in Christianity was necessarily shown in the work of social reconstruction. But it should be thought of in a vital and not merely in a mechanical way. We are interested in politics and economics but not merely as such. We are chiefly interested that the vital energy of Christianity shall push its way through these fields of human activity as well as all others.

The vital principle of the Spirit works both in the individual and in the mass. In the former it begins its operations in conversion, which is a renunciation of allegiance to the present evil world, i. e., the social organization established by the rebellious will of unregenerate man, and an acceptance of the cross of Christ, that is, the personal yielding of self to the sacrifice necessarily involved in this breach with the present world order.

This process is going on in similar ways in the mass also. For our individualistic philosophy must not blind us to the unity of all nature and more especially of the unity of the human race. This great conception of unity is very clearly enunciated by St. Paul and the corollary of it stated, namely, that "we are members one of another." From one to another and mutually among all, the Spirit works and has worked down all the centuries, as the sap of the tree penetrates to each branch and puts forth the foliage and fruitage in their appropriate season. Thus there is a vital unity running through the whole history of the church of Christ which we are coming to discern. The final culmination of this spiritual leavening of the mass is sometimes spoken of in apocalyptic language as a triumph, achieved as the result of conflict and of the display of divine power in a great day of the Lord, but elsewhere also quite as frequently as a grand cosmic change resulting in a new heaven and a new earth replacing the old. This apparent contradiction of view was inevitable for the reason that the old political conception continued to dominate in minds as yet but imperfectly spiritualized and therefore but little gifted with spiritual insight to accept the more spiritual conception. It was the only one they were capable of apprehending.

This practical view of life and mode of life began to hold sway from the very origin of Christianity and tended to crystallize into a new type of social organization the little group of followers of Jesus, heterogeneous as were the elements of which it was composed, Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, bond and free, learned and unlearned.

But we are chiefly interested at the present moment not so much in the historical unfolding of the Christian idea and the delineation of the growth of the Christian society in the world, as in the logical analysis of that idea and some of its more salient aspects. Space admits of my noticing but three of the more interesting of these to the student of social questions.

1. *The Christian conception of life as compared with the pagan.*

The pagan view of life was self-centered. Its aim was self-development. It knew of sin only as ignorance or imperfection. It was materialistic and occupied itself with the seen and the temporal. It accepted the present order as unchangeable, and required absolute devotion of the individual to the State.

The Christian, conscious of his own experience, viewed all things in the light of it. The old order was evil and he had renounced allegiance to it, and viewed it as condemned before God and doomed to pass away. He lived in the light of the unseen and the inwardly discerned.

This modern resuscitation of the pagan type and ideal instinctively arrays itself against the doctrine of the cross, scouting it as an outworn relic of mediaevalism. The effort must fail. No cult of the strenuous life is a lasting and satisfactory interpretation of the teaching of the lowly, suffering, but alone truly redemptive life of the Nazarene. The religion of a cultured mind will never be satisfying till it has pierced the veil which self weaves like a net before the eye of the soul, in order that it may catch the light of that celestial vision of the Son of God revealed within, which alone makes truly free. Well did Edmund Spenser epitomize the Christian philosophy of life in four mellifluous lines,

> And give thyself unto Him, full and free
> That full and freely gave Himself for thee.
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> For love doth love the thing beloved to see,
> That like itself in lovely shape may be.

2. *The Christian Method of Social Reconstruction.*

(Continued on page 8.)

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135

Socialism

BY A. M. KINNEY.

What does Socialism mean?
It means the Saviour's loving dream,
Of that good time, when men will bear
Each other's burdens, and will care
For others' woes, at last will come.
It means that greed has nearly run
Its fiendish course; that war will cease;
That all mankind will live in peace.

When will Socialism come?
'Tis almost here. Its rising Sun
Already sends its shining rays
Athwart the World. This gloomy haze
Of envy, hate and strife for power
Is lifting. Even now the hour
Is striking loud, tolling the knell
Of this exploiting, slaving Hell.

Something New

This is possibly the first time you saw a copy of the Christian Socialist. It is new to you—maybe strange.

But you are a Baptist, and leading Baptist ministers have written practically everything in this number. You know they would not have their names attached to anything very wrong.

That isn't all. They would not write anything which they do not know to be *absolutely right*. They are conscientious and love the truth. They want to help *you* see the truth.

They are bringing you a message of vast importance. You have never had a problem placed directly before your eyes which deserves better attention. They are telling you about Socialism. It is the world's big question.

You cannot laugh it off, nor scoff it away, nor ignore it to death, nor fight it from your door. Socialism is coming. No power can stay it. It is coming rapidly and with mighty power. It is at our very threshold now and will be enthroned speedily.

What are you going to do about it?

Are you afraid of it? Why? Are you fighting it? Why?

Maybe you are afraid of your best friend. Maybe you are fighting your greatest benefactor. If you knew what Socialism is you would welcome it.

Here are a few salient facts about Socialism:

Socialism is the coming social and economic order. It will be characterized by an indefinite enlargement of wealth-production and the abolition of exploitation and poverty. This will be secured through the collective ownership and democratic control of all socially necessary means of production and distribution.

"Socialism does not wish to abolish private property or accumulation of wealth; but it aims to displace the present system of private capital by a system of collective capital, which would introduce a unified organization of national labor."—Prof. Albert Schaffle.

"Socialism being the product of social evolution, the only danger lies in obstructing it."—Rev. F. M. Sprague.

"Government and co-operation are in all things and eternally the laws of life; anarchy and competition, eternally and in all things, the laws of death."—John Ruskin.

"The ethics of Socialism are closely akin to the ethics of Christianity, if not identical with them.

* * *

"(Socialism contemplates), the complete participation of the working classes in the material, intellectual and spiritual inheritance of the human race."—Encyc. Britannica.

"Socialism is simply applied Christianity; the golden rule applied to every day life.

"The whole aim and purpose of Socialism is a closer union of social factors. The present need is growth in that direction."—Prof. Richard T. Ely.

Not only does Socialism stand for this just and entirely reasonable order of society, but the Socialists of to-day are men and women of much intelligence and of high moral character.

As Socialists we stand for justice and love, for brotherhood and comradeship, for kindness and mutual helpfulness. We believe in the golden rule and hold to the highest principles laid down by the Carpenter of Nazareth.

We want you to look into this question more fully. Get some literature. Take some Socialist paper. Become acquainted with the principles of Socialism and you will become a new man.—J. O. B.

This Special Edition

The articles in this number of the Christian Socialist are all contributed by Baptist ministers and laymen. It is in truth a Baptist Special.

The writers are well known to the Baptist world. Most of them are pastors of very prominent churches. They are not fanatics nor dreamers, but are scientific and practical men. They have studied the questions on which they write and are thoroughly posted.

We are making every effort to reach the 34,000 Baptist ministers in this country with a copy of this number. We have their names and addresses and can send the paper directly from here. But we have not yet enough money to accomplish the whole task. We are holding the forms and will be able to print some more if we *get the orders right away*.

If you can send money do so. We will do the rest. Just say that you want us to send the paper to the ministers for the amount you give.

But we are not satisfied to get this number to the ministers only. We want you to send for bundles to distribute in every Baptist church in this country. Think of what that would mean.

Fifty copies would be enough for some churches. They would cost you fifty cents. One hundred copies would go all around in other congregations. That would cost $1. Some churches would need four or five hundred copies. Only a cent apiece for this great propaganda number.

Now if you have not done your share we want to hear from you by return mail with order for a big bundle. You must do it now, for we may not be able to supply you later.

Don't let this glorious opportunity pass. In the name of a suffering humanity, we plead with you to help bring the truth to the people.

Many have responded loyally. The great work is moving on rapidly. The day of victory will soon be here.

"Wealth" awaits you. Dime brings it. Co-operative Brotherhood and University of Humanity, Room 86, 119 La Salle st., Chicago.

Ideal Self-Government

It is said that Thomas Jefferson, when a young man, attended a Baptist business meeting. He there saw men and women, as real brothers and sisters, voting on the different measures brought before the congregation. Such an exhibition of self-government not only won his admiration, but the claim is made that it furnished the great commoner with his enduring ideal of popular government and free institutions. At any rate, the real democracy of the Baptist church is in itself an inspiration. Why should not Christian men and women politically be equals, and equal workers for civic and industrial righteousness?

A. W. Frederick.

One Way

The Christian Sodialist is only fifty cents a year. If you want to learn more about Socialism and what the movement means, you can do nothing better than to send in your subscription now and become a member of this great family.

If you have friends whom you want to interest, send in a club. You get five subscriptions for $2.00.

Have a Home in the Michigan Fruit Belt

where apples, peaches, pears, plums, berries, small fruits and garden products of highest quality grow in profusion. Only actual homeseekers—Socialists preferred—need apply. For terms and general description address with stamp, F. E. Miller, R. R. No. 2, Kibbie, Van Buren Co., Mich.

We are much disappointed in not receiving in time the article promised by Dr. Madison C. Peters. We shall use it in a later issue. Part II. of Dr. Brown's article will appear in next number. Space forbids more than a very small portion of the ordinary material in the several departments.

The Message of the Kingdom

By Rev. F. W. C. Meyer.

Christendom today throbs with the expectancy of the kingdom of God. The revived hope in the coming of Christ, the missionary awakening throughout the church, her clamorous exertion to reach and elevate the masses, the agitation of labor problems, the institutions of Christian Socialism, the messages in many pulpits of prophets who are not afraid of the echo of their voice, the constantly swelling catalogue of literature on social topics, are kingdom signs of the time. Kingdom questions become imperious. Ministers of the gospel dare not remain in the succession of Saul, the son of Kish, who told his relative all about the asses, "but concerning the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not." And a hopeful sign it is that the church is facing her goal. For as Christianity braved opposition and spread with rapidity in early ages, because it looked ahead to the glorious consummation of the divine reign, so Christianity today shall owe its progress to eschewing crawfish methods of indirection and directly laboring for and setting its machinery toward the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

The true purport and central theme of Jesus' preaching was none other than this. Maxims, parables, discourses, exhortations, warnings—turn the kaleidoscope of gospel utterances as you will—again and ever again the central design is the kingdom of God. There is nothing that the Savior of men said or did which cannot be brought under this head. In teaching his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"—the latter clause explanatory of the former—He emphasized as the essence of the kingdom the doing of God's will, the sovereignty of righteousness and love in human affairs.

His disciples, instead of centering the interest of believers by never so ingenious devices around an architectural pile of brick or board, which saints and sinners alike call church are expected first of all to mediate the supremacy of God's will in human affairs. Instead of making denominational principles and practices an end in themselves, eternally to be perpetuated because the fathers bled and died for them, distinctive denominational virtues are, like infantry, cavalry, artillery, marine, in modern warfare, to be marshalled in unison for a common victory, the triumph of right over wrong, of good over evil. Instead of having three or four sermons on the kingdom of God in a barrel that holds forth five years, the whole of the minister's sermon supply ought to be labelled "Kingdom Ammunition." Let the messenger of God vary his phrases as he will, let him speak of the reconstruction of society, or the awakening of a social conscience, or the salvation of individual souls, but never let him disparage a dot of an "i" or the cross of a "t" in the kingdom's message.

That message is the panacea for all our social ills, with its ground-tone of righteousness and love. It is bound to be as effective as its promulgator, Christ, can make it be. Its sphere comprises all of life. Not only spiritual life, which seems to be apportioned oneseventh, but the other six-sevenths of life as well. The ancient Romans worshipped Terminus, a god who watched over the boundaries of their empire. We worship no deity of boundaries. We crown our Master Lord of All. And unless we crown Him Lord of All, we don't crown Him Lord at all. The church of Christ does not fulfil her mission, if she confines her activity to personal and family relations alone. I see no other reason than original sin, which according to the colored candidate's statement, was laziness, why the church should withhold the salt and light of her influence from mercantile, industrial, economic or administrative relations. Not that I advise the transformation of the pulpit into a platform, nor that I advocate reform merely by law. But it surely discloses a lack of wisdom and neglect of opportunity to reform without law. The application of righteous principles to everyday life is no unimportant part of our Christian duty. Some of the laws and customs, our so-called Christian nation still adheres to, are working toward the infringement of righteousness and the abolition of love. We may reverse the order by putting righteousness and love in the imperative, being determined in our social efforts not by the present system of greed and graft, but by the Christian principle of service and honor. Not by the tenet: From every man according to his avarice and to every man according to his wealth. But by the doctrine: From every man according to his ability and to every man according to his need. That change of principle would Christianize our civilization. And our civilization Christianized would go a great way in this marvelous era of the application of forces in making earth more like heaven, in making it pleasureable to do God's will.

F. W. C. MEYER.

Milwaukee, Wis.

Some Spiritual Elements in the Socialist Movement

By Rev. Harvey Dee Brown, Ph. D.

PART I.

A thing for which I believe many leaders and teachers of Christianity will one day seriously reproach themselves and for which the future will sadly and wonderingly condemn them, will be their failure to appreciate the Socialist movement in these its early and creative days. Until recently Socialism has been to them a street corner affair to classify with vice and evil and so far as possible to ignore. Was it not down there by the curb with the material and human refuse instead of in our parlors and pulpits? And could any good thing come out of the street corner and the crowd?

It occurred to but few of these minds to vitalize and modernize the fact that Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners, that it was common people who heard him gladly and that he was arrested and executed as a criminal and disturber of political and religious traditions. That he and his disciples occupied the same outcast position relative to the conventional life of his day that the Socialists occupy toward the modern social environment, did not seem to have greatly quickened their insight. A book like Howard Pyle's "Rejected of Men," was needed to give the right perspective.

Lately, however, the discussions of Socialism in the magazines and the penetration of its own literature and spirit into higher places, have aroused a suspicion that the Socialist movement is not always to speak from the curb, and a more respectful interest is being shown.

But as yet there is very little real appreciation of the elemental spiritual and ethical forces which are seeking expression in this movement of the world's working class. The members of the working class, even those who have the Socialistic purpose, do not yet realize the spiritual values in the movement and religious leaders who should be appreciating and welcoming these spiritual forces dwell very largely in the darkness.

The spiritual qualities which are elementally Christian and of lasting human value in the Socialist movement do not, it must be confessed, lie upon the surface. You will no more find them by looking at some unpleasant Socialist whom you may chance to know, than you will find the heart of Jesus' faith by looking at some who call themselves Christians. Nor will these spiritual values be found by a few moments of reflection upon the conventional notion of Socialism as held by the average man. Not even by spending an hour or a day with some book to find out what the economic and political principles of Socialism are, will you find its spiritual phases, though this is a good way to begin.

The real significance of this movement appears only when one comes to understand somewhat the historical and psychological bases of the movement as well as its economic and political aspects. One needs to read widely into its growing literature and catch the spirit of its thinkers, past and present. Especially does he need to go far enough into their writings to pass the boundaries of analysis, criticism and protest, and to come upon the affirmative and creative spirit, the movement of social and psychical becoming, which finds expression there, and the world-vision which is its goal.

A working man enters into this inner spirit and becomes a part of it, feeling its enthusiasm, promise and great peace, without such study, because his life is on the plane of action and he feels rather than thinks himself into moral harmonies. But those who live in the world of thinking instead of concrete action will reach this heart of the movement only by some such reflective quest. But the effort is worth while and is imperatively demanded of religious and ethical teachers in the interest of the spiritual future of mankind.

One finds when he reaches this vital center that he is dealing with a social movement having a deep and clearing self-consciousness. It is a vital and psychical trend of vast power and initiative. It has, among other elements of its spirit, a strong idealism, a social gospel, a dawning sense of the divine and a strong inspirational force in many realms of life to-day.

I. At the spiritual center of the Socialist movement there is a very strong, practical idealism. At its heart there is an invincible faith in the possibility of making the world over according to humanity's highest conceptions of justice and brotherhood. The head of one of the social settlements in Chicago declared recently that the only idealists in the settlement district were the Socialists. There is certainly no movement in the world to-day more thoroughly dominated by faith in the coming of a new earth wherein righteousness and justice shall dwell and human life be rich and unfettered.

Prof. Matthews in "The Church and the Changing Order" devotes several pages to an estimate of "proletarian idealism." He speaks of the "two great literatures of popular idealism: socialistic propaganda and the journals of organized labor," and declares that "It is time the idealist in the church sees a brother idealist in the man who voices social discontent." He does not go at all beyond the facts which anyone may verify, when he says also: "There is a passionate sincerity in the literature of both Socialists and the labor unions which compels respect. A man * * * must recognize the fact that both the Socialist and the labor movements are brimful of an idealism which is not to be measured by their economic accomplishments. Each alike is a Cause. Each believes itself to be a champion of human betterment. Men will plead and fight for them, and if need be die for either cause with the self-sacrifice which led the martyr to the stake."

But the Socialist is commonly called a materialist. How, then, can he be an idealist? It is true that he does give his especial attention to material things and argues for justice most often in terms of economic life. But it is in the interests of life—deep, complete and joyous life—that he is working on material premises. He studies the material, its laws, its effect upon human thought, creeds, governments, character, in order to understand and master the material and organize it as a basis for a worthy human life. The material is not to him an end but is the beginning. The material is material indeed, and useful only for building the temple of a just Humanity.

This is not materialism in any bad sense. It is a tangible idealism and faith, a creative and redemptive spirituality, such as Jesus had when he healed the sick, fed the hungry and tried to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The materialism which damns is the mind and spirit which finds the goal of life in things and becomes their slave, instead of trusting life itself and seeking to subdue the material into the deepening and unfolding of that life. The Socialist believes that his studies in the material facts of life and history, especially the economic elements, have disclosed the way in which material interests must be and are being organized in order to advance [illegible] human lot. That way of progress is his social gospel.

II. Let us look at this gospel at the heart of the Socialist movement. The Socialist has looked at economic [illegible]s and forces as honestly as a scientist and with the added insight which comes from belonging in and suffering from them. The economic class conflict is in his atmosphere. He feels it, he fights it, he finds it in history and, finally, he formulates it. But with the declaration of the conflict, he announces also a way of escape from it. With this way of escape the Socialist purpose really begins.

The fact of a class conflict steadily deepening is beyond discussion to-day, but how this widening chasm of interests is to be bridged does not appear elsewhere than in the calm assertions of Socialist writers that it must be by vesting the ownership and administration of the economic and industrial plant of modern life with the working class. Socialism thus appears as an effort to overcome a world-wide economic class conflict. It is the world's peace-maker. Even when it fights its battles with the strong coercion of its elemental passions its final result is peace. Prof. Rauschenbusch, in his "Christianity and the Social Crisis," a work whose value to Christian thinkers at just this time is beyond measure, thoroughly appreciates this element in the Socialist purpose. After stating the fact of the class struggle he says, "Here enters Socialism. It proposes to abolish the division of industrial society into two classes and to close the fatal chasm which has separated the employing class from the working class since the introduction of power machinery. * * * It proposes to give the whole body of workers the ownership of these vast instruments of production and to distribute among them all the entire proceeds of their common labor. There would then be no capitalistic class opposed to the working class; there would be a single class which would unite the qualities of both. * * * This would be a permanent solution of the labor question. It would end the present insecurity, the constant antagonism, the social inferiority, the physical exploitation, the intellectual poverty to which the working class is now exposed, even when its condition is most favorable."

Whether the spiritual significance and blessedness of this peace-making position has been fully appreciated in the movement may be doubted, but this spirit of social atonement and unification has been in the movement from the first. The "Communist Manifesto" of Marx and Engels clearly announces the abolishment of class struggles as an outcome of the triumph of the working class and the platforms here and elsewhere emphasize it. It was the clause which taught this in the old platform which led some of us years ago to see the social gospel in Socialism. The words of the present platform on this matter glow wtih religious fervor: "A society based upon this class division carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Such a society is founded on fundamental injustice. * * * Into the midst of this strain and crisis of civilization the Socialist movement comes as the only saving or conserving force. If the world is to be saved from chaos, from universal disorder and misery, it must be by the union of the workers of all nations in the Socialist movement."

The ethical power and spiritual consciousness generated by such an attitude of will, when sincerely cherished by a lar[illegible] section of the people in the most advanced ma[illegible] of our time, ought not to escape the notice and appreciation of those who are looking for the enthronement of Christ's spirit in the world. Even if their vision were vain, the mere reaction upon the character of its followers of such a hope and of labor for it with sacrifice, is no small thing in the life of the human spirit and will not be without its part in the dawn of a new and deeper sense of the divine in humanity.

Items From Everywhere

Edited by George H. Strobell.

The bishop of Stepney, England, Dr. Lang, in a speech at the recent church congress, devoted a large portion of his time to a discussion of the oncoming tide of Socialism.

"We see," he is reported to have said, "the tide of a great movement which, whether we like it or not, is going to be the master current of the life of the people of England in the twentieth century. Some of us welcome it. The nineteenth century was a period of individualism and competition; the twentieth century will take its place as the era of Socialism and cooperation."

* * *

The temperance question seems to be one of the burning issues in Germany. At the Annual Conference in Essen just closed it occupied considerable prominence. The resolution of Wurm was such that the Socialist abstainer could readily support, though some thought it might have been made more plain and outspoken.

It lays stress on the fact that alcohol, while in no way a cause of poverty and rather a result, does at the same time react on poverty and aggravate it.

Social reform, shortening of the hours of labor and better conditions are looked to to cure the evil, as well as a recognition of the dangers of alcoholism. And the workers are begged to give their children under no circumstances alcohol, and the party and labor movement to do their best to free the party meetings from all compulsion to drink by substituting a payment for the rooms we occupy for the payment through the drinks consumed. Wurm further pointed out that the poor and underfed workers have the most reason of all to avoid alcoholism, because just on their weakened frames were its influences most disastrous. Wurm's speech, which was a particularly able analysis of the effects of alcoholism, will be separately published and distributed for propaganda purposes.

The Christian Socialist Fellowship

Prof. E. J. Ward Secretary, Rochester, N. Y.
Rev. William A. Ward, Treasurer, Henderson, Ky.
National Executive Committee of Fifty Members

"Curse ye, Meroz," said the angel of the Lord; "Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Shall some Deborah apply these words to the Christian church in the great years to come—when the present war against privilege and injustice is won, when the nation owns the trusts, when men no longer eat bread in the sweat of other men's faces, when child labor is abolished and every able person is a worker and an owner of the capital, the tools of work? Shall some Deborah have the chance to cry: "Curse ye the church! Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty"?

The Christian Socialist Fellowship answers—No!

If you say "No," you belong to the Christian Socialist Fellowship, and we want you with us, whether you are a member of the Socialist party or not, whether you are franchised or not.

If you believe that organized Christianity is to have no part in the struggle of the people against plutocracy; if you believe that the church of Jesus Christ belongs on the side of the rich, the privileged, on the side of oppression; or if you believe that the church has nothing to say on this question, that the social spirit of Christianity is dead and the church is its tomb; then stay out of this fellowship. You have no place with us, for we are an organization of men and women, of all sorts of denominations, with all sorts of views on other matters, who are bound together by one faith, united in one belief. It is the belief that not only is the social spirit of Christianity not dead, but that the church itself should—and can—and shall be used mightily as a means of helping on the world-wide movement for the final abolition of privilege and the rearrangement of society on a basis of justice and brotherhood, which men call Socialism, that is Comrade-ism.

If you hold that faith, or rather, if that faith holds you, then YOU BELONG WITH US, AND WE WANT YOU TO JOIN OUR FELLOWSHIP. Our numbers are increasing; our movement is growing; we are engaged in the greatest work in the world today. We are calling the social forces of Christianity out of the camp in which they have been sleeping or, at best, making time, out where "His blood red banner streams afar" into the greatest battle in the whole campaign of Man, the bloodless struggle to establish by means of ballot and brains the reign of Justice and Brotherhood upon Earth.

Whether you call yourself a Socialist or not, write to-day to Edward J. Ward, 8 Joslyn place, Rochester, N. Y. (the secretary of the Christian Socialist Fellowship), for information in regard to this movement; or better, if you agree with the purpose of the Fellowship, send him your name and one dollar (or more)—the dollar is to help pay nobody's salary, but the actual costs of propaganda.

The stars in their courses are fighting against Sisera. Will you remain in Meroz?

* * *

Do You Live Near Philadelphia?

On November 3d will be organized in Philadelphia a branch of the Christian Socialist Fellowship. If you live in or near the City of Brotherly Love, write at once to J. P. Brown, 1844 Lithgow street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Current Literature

Edited by Rufus W. Weeks

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS.

(From the Independent, of New York.)

Has Christ anything vital and practical to say to the twentieth century on the social question? In the books before us* we have the affirmation by two spokesmen for the Church that Christ *has* the word of leadership for us now, as regards the problems confronting us. But it is only so far as this affirmation goes that the two writers agree; when the natural next question is asked, "What is that word?" they agree not at all. Professor Leighton, on his part, would like it to be understood that he is not behind the times: he knows of "the ever more insistent questions of the right relations of labor and capital, of the rights and wrongs of labor organizations, * * * of the unemployed, * * * of the minimum hours of labor and the living wage, etc.; in short, the problems of the right distribution of opportunity and means of maintenance."

But when we inquire of him whether Christ advises us to take the side of labor or that of capital: whether to advocate legislative interference in wages and hours of labor, or not; whether to stand for the competitive system or the co-operative system; whether to be individualists or Socialists; when we ask, in short, what word Christ has for us as to the choices we must make if we would be living men of the twentieth century, he tells us that Christ has no specific word on such questions.

"Jesus lays down no political or economic program."

Professor Rauschenbusch sees the matter otherwise: Christ, the captain of our salvation, is still for him the world's leader precisely by virtue of the definiteness of His commands in the present emergency. This thesis forms throughout the background of Professor Rauschenbusch's book. That he has a keen realization of the importance of the question is shown by his opening sentences:

"Western civilization is passing through a social revolution unparalleled in history for scope and power. Its coming was inevitable. The religious, political and intellectual revolutions of the past five centuries, which together created the modern world, necessarily had to culminate in an economic and social revolution such as is now upon us." "The social revolution has been slow in reaching our country. We have been exempt, not because we had solved the problems, but because we had not yet confronted them. We have now arrived, and all the characteristic conditions of American life will henceforth combine to make the social struggle here more intense than anywhere else. The vastness and the free sweep of our concentrated wealth on the one side; the independence, intelligence, moral vigor and political power of the common people on the other side, promise a long-drawn grapple of contesting forces which may well make the heart of every American patriot sink within him."

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*JESUS CHRIST AND THE CIVILIZATION OF TODAY. *By Joseph Alexander Leighton, Ph. D.* New York: The Macmillan Company.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS. *By Walter Rauschenbusch, D. D.,* Professor of Church History in Rochester Theological Seminary. Ppp. 429. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.60 postpaid.

Comrades of the Cross

The following letter is from one of our best workers and most successful sub-getter. Not only that, but she sacrifices everything for the work and we are glad to have a word from her for the Baptist special, as it shows to some extent what a Baptist can do when really alive: "I came to Waco, Texas, in the latter part of January, 1907, and the comrades heard of me. They were few, but faithful. We met at the house of the different comrades on Saturday night and we soon got to doing things. I saw that the harvest was white. The prohibitionists and the antis were wrangling and I telegraphed for three hundred copies of the Christian Socialist. I made a speech on the square and gave out my literature, and from that Sunday on I have given a lecture, taking my text from the teachings of Christ. My crowd has been gathering every Sunday and I believe Waco will be the first Socialist town in Texas and the Socialist headquarters of this part of the country. Glory to God. There are many churches here and also colleges. The people are ready to learn and the teachings of Christ will soon be put into practice. We have mills and poverty and red light districts which Christ's teachings will not let stand. I am proud of Waco and of our faithful comrades. God bless the Christian Socialist and keep it coming. Mrs. M. A. Spurgeon."

Why I Am a Christian Socialist

By Rev. J. O. Bentall.

Man is incurably religious. In order to have his religious craving satisfied he naturally adopts some religious system. As far as he is able he endeavors to find the highest form of religion, and up to this time he has found no religion superior to Christianity.

From my point of view, I am a Christian because I find in Christianity the fullest expression of religious faith and practice. I am not saying now that there is nothing good in Mohammedanism, Confucianism, Buddhism or other religions, but all that is good in those systems is embodied in the Christian religion, and most of the evils found in them are absent. I do not say that the Christian religion is perfect nor that it is final, for future generations will probably adopt faiths and beliefs far better than those we now adhere to. But I am living in the present and in order to live best now I try to associate with that which inspires me to reach out for the *summum bonum.* In a word, I am a Christian because Christianity helps to *furnish* me with, and *inspires* me to *strive* for, my ideals.

After all, it is my religion that gives me my ideals. I can reach out for nothing higher than the objects located within the realm of my religious concept.

The reason is this: God, who is yet a necessary element in religion, is the composite of all that is holy, just, intelligent, loving, true, progressive, creative, mental, material and all other qualities which make up the Absolute. It is in me to desire to be like God. I must therefore aim at those attributes which I conceive to be found in Him.

In dealing directly with God I find no difficulty. Between Him and me there is no disturbing element. In pure thinking and reasoning and in my mental association I have peace with Him. If I were alone on earth I would be able to continue in perfect harmony with this Being whether it be Force, Love, Intelligence, Creative Power or anything else that constitutes my God. I would find no difficulty in loving Him and all the universe which His love has created.

But I am not alone. There are other beings like myself upon the earth. I must sustain a relationship to them as well as a relationship to God. I cannot be in good and regular standing with Him without being in good and regular standing with other beings who like myself are striving to be God-like. In order that I and my fellow-men may have ideals and strive for them, we must live, and to live involves the securing of the means of life. Unless I can secure those means of life without injuring my fellow men I am not able to maintain the attributes of justice and love which I find in God who is my ideal and whom I strive to be like. But my present environment prohibits me from attaining to my ideals.

There are certain cardinal principles in the Christian religion which I must adhere to in order to be a Christian. One of them is: "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." Another is: "Love thy neighbor as thyself." But it is impossible for me to obtain my living and at the same time adhere to these rules. In a society where competition obtains and is accepted as the system under which mankind must live, I cannot secure the means of life without taking something which my neighbor also tries to take and which I get only because I am ahead of him in time, superior to him in strength, above him in intelligence or possess a vantage point given me by some peculiar arrangement to which I was not entitled because of any of my own merits. If I thus take this article which my neighbor also tries to take, I must first prostitute the principle which is the cornerstone in my religious structure and set it aside while I appropriate and use this article as my means of life. I could let my neighbor have this article in question, but that would only change the wrong from one person to another.

If I am in business, and my neighbor is also in business, I am compelled to look for the trade which my neighbor also looks for. If I do not succeed in getting that trade I do not love my neighbor. If I succeed in getting it my neighbor does not love me. Under competition my gain becomes my neighbor's loss and if I am to succeed and become prosperous he must of necessity go down and become bankrupt, providing competition has free play. It is only by checking competition that the two of us might possibly go up together and make equal gain.

If my business grows I must engage help, and I do not engage that help for any other purpose than to secure an added income and swell my possessions. It is very clear that the labor I employ must furnish that increase which we generally term profits. Whatever possessions I acquire over and above those for which I have actually expended energy in the form of productive labor, whether mental or physical, I have acquired by means of manipulating some other man's labor. If I have not earned all my possessions someone else has earned that part of them which I have not earned. The laborer who has contributed to my wealth, has done that unwillingly and only because of my advantageous position have I been able to take away from him a part of the product of his labor. But the entire product of his labor is actually his. I have thus not only taken wealth that was not my own, but I have deprived the laborer of that which is actually his.

But what about my ideals as a Christian? Have I not eliminated them from my entire life? Have I not run from them instead of making headway toward them? For my ideals are love, justice, neighborliness, honesty and fairness. I have had to put them all aside.

Under the system of competition it is as impossible to put into practice the principles which are indispensible to the Christian religion as it would be to further a man's happiness by transfixing him with a bayonet. I am therefore helpless as a Christian to carry out my desire, and Christianity, which came and gave me my ideals and opened my eyes and gave me a vision of holiness and love and justice and truth and righteousness, has become only a fiend that haunts me and prods me and tosses me from earth to heaven and from heaven to hell and gives me no rest and no peace and no comfort, only tears and suffering,and woe and despair. Without the ideals that Christianity has given me I could go forth into the world and fight my own way and think little or nothing of my actions though every move I made meant the death and destruction of my fellow men. I am in a lamentable position. That which I would I do not, and that which I would not I do. I begin to cry with the great Apostle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And yet I would not be without the inspiration of the ideals which the Christian religion has afforded me. In spite of it all, I would rather suffer with and through those ideals than live like the savage who has them not. So I am a Christian because Christianity has helped to furnish me with my ideals.

Why am I a Socialist? Because Socialism will make it possible for me to *attain* to my ideals.

I have already pointed out the impossibility of carrying out the principle of the golden rule under competition. Under co-operation, which is Socialism, it not only becomes possible, but it becomes natural to live by that rule.

I am a Socialist, because Socialism offers a *modus operandi* by which I may reach out and progress towards my ideals. Socialism is the material side of that of which Christianity is the religious. Socialism is the ferry-boat that carries the slave from the Southern State of bondage across the river into the Northern State of freedom. I begin by turning the searchlight of the golden rule upon Socialism. Will it stand the examination? Unless it does, I must throw it aside. I will not be lenient nor tender-hearted in my dealings with Socialism. It must prove up and make good or I must discard it even as I discard capitalism. The golden rule is a good standard by which to measure this system and we will submit it to the test.

Socialism means co-operation. It means that every member of society shall contribute to the welfare and development and enjoyment of society. Whatever I do under Socialism will benefit myself and also my neighbor. I can perform no useful labor without increasing my own and my neighbor's well-being. My neighbor cannot produce anything useful without benefiting himself and me. But if that be the case I am already doing what I want that my neighbor should do for me and I do this willingly and gladly. My neighbor also does for me that which he has desired that I should do for him and he does it gladly and willingly. I and my neighbor have been desirous of being mutually helpful to one another because we love one another, and under this system of co-operation the doors have at once been swung open and we have been turned into the paradise which offers us the opportunity to enhance the happiness of one another. I have thus been able to take a long stride towards and almost reaching up to that ideal which I was furnished by the Christian religion.

If we go a little further we will find that under Socialism my neighbor cannot prosper at the expense of my well-being nor can I prosper at the expense of his well-being. I can take no advantage of him and he can take no advantage of me. When he labors he labors for himself and me and when I labor, I labor for myself and him. But if we are yoke-fellows and co-laborers, our inter-relationship will tend to become one of affection and love and unless I am by nature depraved I will after a while love that neighbor even as my own self. There is nothing that so binds people together with cords of love as working together for a common good. That command, therefore, which has been a stumbling block to Christendom and which has been looked upon as impossible of execution becomes not only acceptable and possible to follow out, but it becomes the standard by which all men will delight to live.

The Founder of the Christian religion has made it clear that people were not intended for a world of suffering and hardship and want. I am in agreement with Him in my feeling that people should have life and have it superabundantly. Our good God has provided us with a world so full of good things that every member of the human family could enjoy that superabundant life to which he is entitled. That a few men should be allowed to fence in and build a wall around the great storehouses of God's creation and keep the great majority of God's children separated from even the most imperative necessaries of life is a crime that even the Man of Calvary has not been able to atone for. Under Socialism all the storehouses of earth and heaven will be opened up to the rightful owners. As long as there is suffering and want there is something wrong with the economic system.

In a body social which has adopted its several institutions it is necessary that those institutions are put upon a secure foundation.

The institution which we call the State or government must necessarily rest upon a moral basis or it cannot endure. The laws of the State must be righteous or the State is at once in jeopardy. This brings us directly into the political arena. Our laws are enacted by our legislatures and our legislators are chosen by the people—more or less. I say more or less because it is a well-known fact that only comparatively few are now running the government. Money has entered in and private interests have taken a hand in the political game until politics have become a huge gambling system.

Another institution without which the human race could not exist is the home. That the results of competition are threatening the overthrow, a dissolution of the moral home and monogamous family is no longer a matter of speculation. The poverty of the poor has reduced the home of the poor to a mere hovel. The disadvantage of bringing up children under those conditions is so great that no one can reasonably expect anything but people deformed and contorted both physically and morally. Child labor which is now allowed to such an alarming extent that even a blind administration like the present one sees its danger, is reducing the vitality of the human species so rapidly that its propagation will in the near future become an impossibility. The immorality of the rich is no less striking than the deterioration of the poor. If the rich could supply the earth with a stock of healthy offspring there might be some hope, but where one would expect the remedy one only finds the curse. The rich are money-maniacs and their offspring are many maniacs. The idleness and luxury found in the rich home together with the continual knowledge that this idleness and luxury have been obtained wrongfully are demoralizing influences which cannot be counterbalanced by education or any other special effort. The overwork of the divorce courts, the over-population of the under-world and the overcrowding of our insane asylums are matters of evidence that, unless there is a speedy remedy, the institution which we call the home must suffer dissolution. Socialism would give every individual security in obtaining his livelihood and give him a sufficient amount to maintain a clean, sanitary, comfortable home, which would enable every able-bodied individual to produc ehis share of the necessaries of life, which would save our women and young girls from the fate of the under-world, which would make it possible for every young man to provide for that which he instinctively craves, which would eliminate money influences from marriage contracts, which would make conditions favorable for people who love one another to unite without being turned by temptation of wealth or scared by the corrosion of poverty, which would take children out of the mill and mine and factory and give them a reasonable education, which would establish equity and social peace, is the only hope of salvation for the perpetuation of the family and the establishment of the Christian home. Socialism has been charged with attacking and destroying the family. Unless we have Socialism very soon there will be no family to destroy.

A third institution which might well be mentioned is the church. While the State has suffered under capitalism and while the family is rapidly driven toward destruction under the present system, these two have not suffered to so great an extent as the church. In defending competition which is fundamentally immoral, the church which should be the exponent of the highest ethical principles has put the dagger into her own heart. The teachings of Jesus cannot be preached consistently together with upholding and defending the principles of competition. That the church has suffered because of her complicity in this immoral warfare, is not to be wondered at. She has been fighting with one hand to get people into the kingdom of God and with the other to get the kingdom of competition into the people. Man by nature is too righteous to be dragged along by so inconsistent a leader. Were it not that he is incurably religious which also means that he is incurably righteous he would not have continued so long in his endeavors to save the church from total annihilation.

The kidnapping of Jesus by capitalism is the greatest crime that has ever been committed since the Christian era began. A sorrowing world is running around wailing and lamenting and saying: "They have taken away my Master and I know not where they have lain Him." This capture of Jesus of Nazareth, the workingman and the teacher, and appropriating Him as its own is the most blasphemous act that capitalism has yet committed. Jesus does not belong to the kingdom of robbery and oppression and can never become a peaceable and docile member of that royal household. Money cannot quiet Him and wealth cannot stop His mouth. The working people of the earth have heard His cry and have set out for His rescue. The price put upon His head is high, for as long as capitalism is able to keep Him and use Him in pulpit and pew for the accumulation of more dollars it will not easily let him go. But the working-class will not let their Comrade languish in the confinement of the enemy. Labor will pay the ransom and redeem the Carpenter of Nazareth from the clutches of the demons of the competitive system. Jesus belongs to labor and the religion of Jesus can find its home only in a system where justice and love are the foundation stones. Socialism will redeem the church and make her the power for good which she was intended to be.

And so in my struggle for justice and in my longing for love, in my striving for brotherhood and in my craving for right, in my hungering for righteousness and in my thirsting for peace, in my labor and suffering for and with my fellow men, I see the hilltop of freedom and the highland of equity, and I hasten on, inspired by the spirit of Christianity and carried forward by the principles of Socialism. J. O. BENTALL.

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